

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Do you take advance applications for housing?***

Currently, Equity Residential does not accept advance applications for on-base family housing. Service Members assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord may apply for housing while on leave but they cannot accept housing until they are signed into the installation.

### ***When can I apply for housing?***

You may apply for on-base family housing upon arrival at Joint Base Lewis-McChord by attending an in-processing briefing. The in-processing briefing covers both on-base and off-base housing options. The briefing is from 0900-1000 hours, Monday through Friday at Bldg 2150, Liggett Ave (adjacent to Waller Hall). Equity Residential's Centralized Leasing Center can be reached at (253) 912-2150.

### ***Can I select the area where I want to live?***

Yes, on-base family housing operates on a community of choice model separated by rank bands. You will be offered the opportunity to apply for housing areas which have housing for your pay band. The enlisted pay bands are: E1-E4, E4-E6, E7-E8 and E9. The officer pay bands are: W1-O3, W4-O5, O6-O7 and above.

### ***Can I live off-post?***

Residing in on-base family housing is not mandatory, except for personnel assigned in designated key and essential positions. All Service Members with a family housing requirement are eligible to apply for on-base housing at the daily housing brief. Service Members choosing to purchase or rent a home or apartment off-base are highly encouraged to utilize the Housing Services Office.

### ***How long does it take to find housing?***

Wait times vary by rank and bedroom requirement. Current wait times by neighborhood are available at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com).

### ***What size are the houses (on-post, off-post) and where can I get/see the floor plan?***

Home sizes vary widely with square footages ranging from 900 to 2700 square feet. Floor plans for on-base family housing are available at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com).

### ***Will military members still have the option to live off-post?***

Residing in on-base family housing is not mandatory, except for personnel assigned in designated key and essential positions. All Service Members with a family housing requirement are eligible to apply for on-base housing at the daily housing brief. Service Members choosing to purchase or rent a home or apartment off-base are highly encouraged to utilize the Housing Services Office.

### ***What are Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) entitlement and rent allotments?***

The purpose of the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is to provide fair housing allowances to Service Members. BAH rates are published annually and are based on rental-housing costs in the private sector. BAH rates are available at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm> using a duty station zip code of "98433".

### ***How and who is starting and stopping my BAH and/or Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA)?***

Basic Allowance for Housing with dependents (BAH W/D) is paid to Service Members who live on or off-base with their authorized dependents. It is also paid to Service Members (geographical bachelors) who live in single-type government quarters and have dependents (a spouse, child in legal custody of the Soldier, or other recognized dependents) and those dependents are not occupying non-privatized family type government quarters. Upon in-processing at the Joint Base Lewis-McChord DMPO, Soldiers already in receipt of BAH W/D, with no changes in their dependency status, will recertify their entitlement by filling out a DA Form 5960. When a change in dependency status (i.e., marriage, divorce, birth, death, court documents, etc.) occurs, the Soldier will submit the appropriate documents to their unit for verification. The PAC will prepare the DA Form 5960 and submit supporting documentation on a Unit Transmittal Memorandum to the DMPO. Additional information is available from 9<sup>th</sup> Financial Management Company at (253) 966-0256.

### ***Are there any restrictions on bringing our pets?***

Yes.

#### ***Restrictions on the number of pets?***

For on-base family housing, no more than four pets are authorized per home. For unaccompanied personnel housing, one 30 gallon fish tank per room with non life-threatening fish is the only type of pet allowed.

#### ***Restrictions on the type/breed of dog?***

The following dog breeds are not permitted in on-base family housing: Pit Bulls (American Staffordshire Bull terriers or English Staffordshire Bull terriers), Rottweilers, Doberman Pinchers, Chows, and wolf hybrids or any other breeds (including mixed breeds) that are deemed aggressive or potentially aggressive unless the dog is a certified military working dog that is being boarded by its handler/trainer.

#### ***Restriction on the type of pet, i.e., "Can I have my pet snake/iguana/ferret/potbellied pig?"***

Exotic animals such as reptiles, rodents (other than hamsters and guinea pigs), hedgehogs, skunks, rats, raccoons, squirrels, potbellied pigs, ocelots, coatimundis, ferrets, monkeys, snakes, prairie dogs, minks and farm animals are not allowed.

### ***What schools are in the area?***

- **On-Base:** Clover Park School District operates six elementary schools on Joint Base Lewis-McChord including Beachwood, Carter Lake, Clarkmoor, Evergreen, Greenwood and Hillside. Information is available at <http://www.cloverpark.k12.wa.us>.

- **Off-Base:**

- Bethel – (253) 683-6000 or <http://www.bethelsd.org>
- Clover Park – (253) 583-5000 or <http://www.cloverpark.k12.wa.us>
- Fife – (253) 517-1000 or <http://www.fifeschools.com>
- Franklin Pierce – (253) 298-3000 or <http://www.fp.k12.wa.us>
- North Thurston – (360) 412-4400 or <http://www.nthurston.k12.wa.us>
- Peninsula – (253) 530-1000 or <http://www.psd401.net>
- Puyallup – (253) 841-1301 or <http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us>
- Steilacoom – (253) 896-2897 or <http://www.steilacoom.k12.wa.us>
- Tacoma – (253) 571-1000 or <http://www.tacoma.k12.wa.us>
- University Place – (253) 566-5600 or <http://www.upsd.wednet.edu/upsd/site/default.asp>
- Yelm – (360) 458-1900 or <http://www.ycs.wednet.edu/ycs/site/default.asp>

***What is the best school?***

School ratings can be obtained at [www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org).

***What is the loaner furniture program?***

Joint Base Lewis-McChord does not operate a loaner furniture program.

***Where do I stay while I wait for housing?***

Families may stay in temporary lodging while waiting for on-base housing or locating housing off-base. If lodging facilities are full, arrangements can be made by the desk clerk for local hotels at a reduced rate.

**Rainier Inn (Lewis Main)**

COMM: (253) 964-0211

DSN: (312) 357-5051/2815

COMM Fax: (253) 967-2253

DSN Fax: (312) 357-2253

Email: [JBLMIMCOMDFMWRLodgingReservation@conus.army.mil](mailto:JBLMIMCOMDFMWRLodgingReservation@conus.army.mil)

Website: <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/lodging>

**Evergreen Inn (McChord Field)**

COMM: (253) 982-5613; (253) 584-1471

DSN: (312) 982-5613; (312) 584-1471

COMM Fax: (253) 982-3596

DSN Fax: (312) 357-2253

Email: [LodgingR@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:LodgingR@mcchord.af.mil)

Website: <http://www.mcchordafb.us/lodging.html>

***Do I get credit if I'm coming from a dependent restricted tour?***

Yes, upon completion of a dependent-restricted tour, including involuntary extension beyond initial tour, wait list eligibility date will be date departed previous duty station for the dependent-restricted tour or a maximum 14-month credit. Service Members who obtain family members during the tour and were separated from those family members will receive credit only for time separated. Voluntary extensions beyond the initial tour negate all credit. Eligibility for placement on a waiting list at the next installation of assignment is not affected by a "stop movement" action. Service Members involuntarily extended due to stop movement will retain their waiting list status for up to 14-month credit.

***How much credit (months) do I get from being on a dependent restricted tour?***

Date departed previous duty station for the dependent-restricted tour or a maximum 14-month credit.

***Do I need renters insurance for on-post, partner or private rental housing?***

Renters Insurance is included in the cost of your BAH while you reside in family housing on Joint Base Lewis McChord. Here is a quick overview of the Policy coverage that is provided by Delos Insurance Co. Upon effective coverage date, Deans and Homer the managing underwriter, will mail a complete policy including detailed information on how to handle claims, questions or changes to the policy. Deans and Homer customer Service department can be reached at (800) 548-1616.

Coverage Limit

Personal Property - \$20,000

Personal Liability - \$100,000

Deductable on Personal Property - \$250.00

Deductable on Liability Claim - \$0.00

***Who is eligible for Family housing?***

All Service Members with a family housing requirement are eligible to apply for on-base family housing. Eligible Service Members wishing to apply for on-base housing will fill out an application during in-processing with the Housing Services Office. Service Members will be required to choose one of the housing communities at the time of application. Service Members are placed on the waiting list for on-base housing based on their rank, bedroom requirement and community chosen.

***What is the waiting time for housing?***

Wait times vary by rank and bedroom requirement. Current wait times by neighborhood are available at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com).

***What determines the list I am placed on and my placement on the list?***

Service Members choose the housing community wait list they are placed on at time of application consistent with their rank band and bedroom requirement. Wait list position is determined by eligibility date. When two or more Service Members on a specific wait list have the same eligibility date, all other criteria being equal, the position on the wait list will be determined by rank and date of rank with the Senior Member having the higher priority.

***What is a waiting list?***

A wait list is a priority ordered list of Service Members awaiting housing in a specific community. When homes become available in a specific community, the Service Members on the wait list are contacted and offered housing based on their position on the wait list.

***Once placed on the wait list, may I transfer to a different list?***

Yes. Service Members may request to change wait lists but must do so within the first 30 days of the application date to retain their eligibility date. After the first 30 days, the eligibility date becomes the date of submission on the wait list update form.

***What happens if someone has the same eligibility date as me?***

When two or more Service Members on a specific wait list have the same eligibility date, all other criteria being equal, the position on the wait list will be determined by rank and date of rank with the senior member having the higher priority.

***What does it mean if my wait list position moves up and down?***

Your wait list position moves up when personnel with a higher position on the wait list accept housing and are removed from the wait list. Your wait list position moves down when personnel with an earlier eligibility date than yours are added to the wait list or when personnel are authorized priority housing.

***May I request placement on more than one wait list at one time?***

No. Applicants may not be on more than one housing wait list at one time.

***How long will my application remain active once submitted?***

Until you request to be removed from the wait list.

***What is military Family housing privatization?***

The Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) is a public/private program whereby private sector developers may own, operate, maintain, improve and assume responsibility for military family housing, where doing so is economically advantageous and national security is not adversely affected. The MHPI was enacted on February 10, 1996 as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996. Under the MHPI authorities, the Department of Defense (DoD) can work with the private sector to revitalize military family housing.

***How does military housing privatization affect a Service Member's BAH?***

Privatization does not affect the amount of BAH that is allocated to a Service Member.

***How will rent be paid to the privatized community housing partner and what does it cover?***

Rent is paid by MAC allotment and is equal to the Joint Base Lewis-McChord BAH rate. The BAH paid by Service Members to Equity Residential covers rent, lawn maintenance, renters insurance, trash/recycle/bulk pick up, water/sewer usage, and baseline electric and gas consumption. Additional information is available at <http://www.jblmc.com/OurCommunity.aspx?cat=aboutLMCC>.

***How does privatization affect the service I receive?***

Privatization should improve the on-base family housing service you receive. The Army's Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) is the essential element in solving the Army's family housing problems, i.e., conditions and deficits, and we are committed and on track to making our Army installations safe, attractive, and modern places for our Soldiers and their families to live.

***Will/is there to be a Self-Help program?***

Yes, Equity Residential maintains a Self-Help program. Contact (253) 912-2150 or visit the Resident Portal at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com) for more information.

***What are the requirements for vacating my home?***

Make an appointment with your Neighborhood Manager to complete a Notice to Vacate (NTV) and schedule a pre-walk and final-walk move-out inspection. Contact (253) 912-2150 or visit the Resident Portal at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com) for more information.

***When I move, do I have to clean?***

Yes. Your Neighborhood Manager will provide you with a checklist of Minimum Cleaning Standards for Family Housing. Please use this as a guide to prepare for your final move-out inspection with an Equity Residential representative. Contact (253) 912-2150 or visit the Resident Portal at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com) for more information.

***Under privatization, will the partner handle the clearing process, or will it remain with housing?***

All installation clearing is handled by the Housing Services Office. Contact (253) 967-3581/5165 or [jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil](mailto:jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil) for more information.

***I have two children, one female and one male; how many bedrooms do I qualify for?***

Lewis-McChord Communities establishes its bedroom requirement based on Army Regulation 420-1, which states that the same sex child shares a room up to the age of 10 years. The opposite sex child shares a room up to the age of 6 years. When there are two children of the opposite sex (boy & girl) under the age of six years, the oldest child will be

eligible for their own bedroom when he/she turns six years old. Having two children residing with you automatically qualifies you for a three bedroom. Adherence to this regulation is based on the availability of quarters at each installation.

***I have a Family member enrolled in EFMP, how will that affect my on-post housing assignment and waiting time?***

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) does not always equate to "priority housing." When there is a need for single story units or handicap facilities, an exception to policy would have to be addressed and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Contact (253) 912-2150 or visit the Resident Portal at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com) for more information.

***If I live on post, what type of housing can I expect?***

Service Members may expect housing comparable to the housing available off-base.

***I am a dual military household, whose name will my privatized (on-post partner) housing lease be under?***

The housing lease will be under the highest ranking individual in the dual military household.

***I have a dual military household and my wife is stationed at another installation. Can I apply for housing?***

No. Military married to military are only authorized on-base family housing when jointly assigned to the BAH rate area.

***Can my spouse or someone else accept a home on my behalf?***

Yes; however, the spouse or other designee must provide power of attorney documentation. The power of attorney must include authorization to: (1) start and stop of BAH allotments and (b) sign for real property.

***I currently live on post but would like to move to a different house. Can we apply for another wait list?***

Yes. Residents are allowed to transfer; however, a transfer fee may be required depending on the resident's reason for transferring. Contact (253) 912-2150 or visit the Resident Portal at [www.jblmc.com](http://www.jblmc.com) for more information.

***In privatized on-post housing will I be responsible for utilities?***

Prospective residents should be aware that utilities are not free. Joint Base Lewis-McChord has fully implemented the Department of the Army's Residents' Responsibility Utility Program for electric and gas to encourage energy conservation. Utility program and conservation information is available on the Minol website at <http://www.minolusa.com/army-resident.html>.

***Can I accept on-post housing before I sign into the installation?***

No. Service Members must sign-in to Joint Base Lewis-McChord before assignment to on-base family housing is made.

***I am a single Service Member with one child, am I eligible for on-post housing?***

Single Service Members are authorized on-base family housing if receiving with-dependent rate BAH and the dependent shares the household. A military member separated from a civilian spouse, with shared custody of a common dependent, must have physical (controlling) custody (referred to as custodial custody) of a dependent child to be eligible for on-base family housing.

***I'm TDY in route, when can I be put on the housing list?***

When a Service Member is ordered on PCS with TDY enroute and Home Assignment Area of Preference (HAAP) assignments to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, they are not authorized to apply for on-base family housing prior to arrival of the Sponsor. Service Members who arrive at Joint Base Lewis-McChord while TDY enroute may place their name on the appropriate waitlist. Service Members must sign-in to Joint Base Lewis-McChord before assignment to housing is made.

***What will my eligibility date be?***

Your eligibility date will be back dated to the date you departed your last permanent duty station.

***Does it start when I depart my permanent duty station, or when I finish the course or when I arrive at my new permanent duty station?***

Your eligibility date starts the date you departed your last permanent duty station.

***What amenities are included with the privatized on-post community housing?***

Living in Lewis-McChord Communities brings many benefits. Amenities include dedicated neighborhood management and maintenance teams, community centers, resident activities, walking trails and parks. To learn about the Rent with Equity Home Ownership program, Coast to Coast Program, and Perks Program visit

<http://www.jblmc.com/OurCommunity.aspx?cat=ourresidents>.

***My Family was assigned to a 4-bedroom home at my last duty station. Will I automatically qualify for a 4-bedroom home?***

Lewis-McChord Communities establishes its bedroom requirement based on Army Regulation 420-1. Adherence to this regulation is based on the availability of quarters at the installation.

***Once I am offered a home, how long do I have to accept/decline?***

All applicants will be given 48 hours to accept or decline a housing offer. After 48 hours, the home will be offered to the next available individual on the wait list.

***What happens if I decline a home?***

You may decline one housing offer without losing your wait list position.

***Will my BAH/OHA cover my rent and utilities?***

Your BAH/OAH will cover your rent and baseline utility consumption. Joint Base Lewis-McChord has fully implemented the Department of the Army's Residents' Responsibility Utility Program for electric and gas to encourage energy conservation. Utility program and conservation information is available on the Minol website at

<http://www.minolusa.com/army-resident.html>.

***If I get married after I have been living off post with a certificate of nonavailability (CNA) do I have to apply for on post housing?***

No, on-base family housing is a choice. With the exception of designated Key and Essential personnel, Service Members are not required to live on-base.

***How much is the rent for off-post housing?***

Rent for off-base housing varies based on location, type, size and condition. Contact (253) 967-3581/5165 or [jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil](mailto:jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil) for more information.

***Are there any off limit Landlords?***

No; however, we encourage Service Members considering renting to participate in the Rental Partnership Program (RPP). Contact (253) 967-3581/5165 or [jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil](mailto:jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil) for more information.

***How do I get a list of available rentals in the area?***

The Housing Services Office keeps a list of available apartments and houses for sale or rent and also maintains a current listing of realty companies that do not charge a fee for their property listings. The Housing Services Office supports the DoD Automated Housing Referral Network (AHRN) for locating housing in surrounding Joint Base Lewis-McChord communities, as well as gathering information about other duty stations. AHRN is accessible 24 hours a day; 7 days a week. Service members may access AHRN website at: [www.ahrn.com](http://www.ahrn.com). The program allows military members and families to:

- Search listings and pictures of available rentals near military installations
- Find out about shared rentals
- List their own properties for rent to other military families
- List their homes for sale by owner (FSBO) to other military members
- Contact installation housing offices

The Housing Services Office also offers Home Buying and Selling workshops throughout the year. Workshops are taught by certified instructors from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (Nonprofit Housing Advocacy). Workshops cover how to budget and save for a down payment, why it is beneficial to prequalify for financing, how to find a home and make an offer, how to apply for financing (VA/FHA loans), why it is important to have a home inspected, what takes place at closing, how to maintain a home after it has been purchased and what to do if financial trouble is encountered after a home is purchased. Contact (253) 967-3581/5165 or [jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil](mailto:jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil) for more information.

***I just received Deployment Orders. Can I terminate my lease before I depart?***

Yes; however, it is important to comply with the terms and conditions of your signed lease. The Service Members' Civil Relief Act (SCRA) allows a Service Member to terminate a residential lease if he receives orders to active duty for 180 days, permanent change of station orders, or temporary deployment orders for more than 90 days. The lease must have been in existence prior to the receipt of the orders and the landlord must be given thirty days of notice prior to vacating the premises. The Service Member must also provide the landlord with a copy of their orders. To obtain legal assistance with SCRA issues, contact the Legal Assistance Office at (253) 967-0589 or <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/sja>.

***I received notification that my Family can move on-post but I just renewed my lease. Can I break the lease and move?***

While you can break your lease consistent with the specific terms and conditions of your lease, it may not be advisable to do so. It is important to recognize that breaking your lease may incur financial penalty. If a Service Member is unable to accept on-base housing for reasons beyond their control (such as a restrictive lease clause), the Service Member will retain relative position on the wait list with notification to Equity Residential. We encourage all Service Members considering breaking their lease, to first consult with either the Housing Services Office at (253) 967-3581/5165 or [jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil](mailto:jblmimcomdpwrcdhso@conus.army.mil) or the Legal Assistance Office at (253) 967-0589 or <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/sja>.

***I'm unaccompanied; do I have to live on-post?***

**Soldiers** - E5 and below, single and unaccompanied are required to live in on-base barracks. **Airmen** - E4 and below with under 3 years time in service, single and unaccompanied are required to live in on-base dormitories. **All other unaccompanied personnel** are eligible for a Certificate of Non-Availability (CNA) to receive BAH at the without dependent rate to reside off-base.

- **Certificates of Non-Availability (CNA):** Brigade/Battalion/Company/Unit commanders do not have the authority to direct (E1-E5) bona-fide unaccompanied personnel and sponsors receiving Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Differential (DIFF) to move off-base with the understanding that they will be paid BAH. Service Members (E1-E5) must have written confirmation that their request for exception to policy has been approved by the Garrison Commander and a CNA issued to them prior to entering into a lease and moving off-base.
- **Geographic Bachelors (GB's):** Geographical Bachelor personnel are Service Members entitled to BAH at the "with dependent" rate, who are voluntarily separated from their dependents for personal reasons/choice. Geographic bachelors are not authorized assignment to Unaccompanied Personnel Housing Permanent Party Barracks/Dormitories due to the limited number of barracks/dormitory resources. Space available (space-A) occupancy will only be provided to these Service Members in extreme hardship cases. All other housing avenues must be exhausted before this option is requested, i.e., lodging, off-base hotel.
- **Service Member Married to Service Member (E1-E5):** Unaccompanied Service Members married to Service Members on separate tours will be assigned to permanent party barracks/dormitories on the same basis as unmarried personnel. Service Members both assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord or within a 50 mile radius of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, are entitled to receive a CNA and reside off-base. For a Service Member married to Service Member stationed outside the 50 mile radius, spouse must have orders to Joint Base Lewis-McChord or local area prior to Service Member moving off-base. BAH (CNA) will be approved no earlier than two months prior to "report no later than date" listed on spouse's orders, for setup of household.

***My roommate and I both signed a lease but she has moved out. Can I get out of the lease?***

It will depend on the specific terms and conditions of your lease. To obtain legal assistance, contact the Legal Assistance Office at (253) 967-0589 or <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/sja>.